

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 02038 060622Z

51

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 SAM-01 SR-02

ORM-03 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAB-01 DRC-01 /165 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2092

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

CONFIDENTIAL TEL AVIV 2038

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR PFOR, JO, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI LAND PURCHASES ON WEST BANK

REF: JERUSALEM 0495, AMMAN 1639

1. IN RESPONSE TO OUR INQUIRY ABOUT REPORTS OF LAND SPECULATION
ON WEST BANK BY PRIVATE ISRAELI CITIZENS, MFA TOLD US APRIL 4
THAT REPORTS APPEARING IN PRESS HAD VASTLY EXAGGERATED DEGREE
OF SPECULATION CURRENTLY GOING ON. MFA SOURCE ADMITTED THAT
THERE HAD BEEN SOME PRIVATE SPECULATION BUT SAID THIS HAD BEEN
PATTERN EVEN SINCE 1967. WHEN WE MENTIONED FIGURE OF 3000
DUNAMS (AMMAN REFTEL), MFA OFFICIAL CONCEDED THAT IT MIGHT
BE THIS HIGH BUT TERMED THAT AN INSIGNIFICANT AMOUNT.

2. WE SAID THAT WE HAD HEARD REPORTS THAT PRIVATE ISRAELI
INDIVIDUALS OR FIRMS WERE PURCHASING LAND IN LARGE AMOUNTS
ON BOTH SIDES OF JERICHO-JERUSALEM ROAD AND IN AREA OF BEIT JALA
AS WELL AS AROUND KALANDIA AIRPORT. MFA OFFICIAL PROFESSED
TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF PURCHASES IN THESE AREAS.

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 02038 060622Z

3. WHEN WE RAISED RECENT REPORTS APPEARING IN HAARETZ AND

DAVAR THAT KKL AND ISRAEL LANDS AUTHORITY WERE
CONTINUING TO BUY LAND ON WEST BANK IN LARGE AMOUNTS AND
THAT KKL DIRECTOR HAD BEEN QUOTED TO THIS EFFECT, MFA
OFFICIAL SAID THAT HE HAD CHECKED WITH KKL DIRECTOR AND LATTER
DENIED THAT HE HAD MADE STATEMENTS REPORTED IN PRESS.

4. COMMENT: : IT IS UNCLEAR TO US WHETHER MFA WOULD BE
AWARE OF LARGE-SCALE, PRIVATE PURCHASES OF LAND ON WEST
BANK. AS HAS BEEN REPORTED, THESE PURCHASES ARE USUALLY
CARRIED OUT THROUGH A WEST BANK AGENT EMPLOYING AN IRREVO-
CABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY. PURCHASES SUCH AS THIS ARE
CONTRARY TO ISRAELI REGULATIONS AND ARE THREFORE NOT
REGISTERED WITH ISRAELI AUTHORITIES. AS FOR PURCHASES BY
ISRAL LANDS AUTHORITY AND KKL, ISRAELIS IN OFFICIAL
CAPACITIES HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH
US. WE HAVE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS REQUESTED APPOINT-
MENTS WITH KKL AND ISRAEL LANDS AUTHORITY TO DISCUSS THIS
SUBJECT, BUT HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO SECURE APPOINTMENTS WITH
ANY RESPONSIBLE OFFICILS. IF DEPT IS INTERESTED IN PURSUING
SUBJECT FURTHER, DO YOU WISH ME TO HANDLE AT HIGH MFA LEVEL
OR DO YOU PREFER TO TAKE IT UP WITH ISRAELI EMBASSY WASHINGTON?
PLEASE ADVISE.

KEATING

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